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INFO RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 000664

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TAGS: PREL UNSC KPKO LE IS
SUBJECT: ACTION REQUEST: ADDRESSING THE UN'S REQUEST FOR
CLUSTER BOMB DATA IN SOUTH LEBANON

REF: USUN 651

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay M. Khalilzad, per 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶11. (C) Summary and Comment. In a Presidential Statement (PRST) adopted on August 3 (reftel), the UN Security Council reiterated its support for the Secretary-General's request that Israel provide the UN detailed data on its use of cluster bombs in south Lebanon to aid in UN de-mining efforts. The Council first made this request in a PRST adopted in April 2007. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) reports that it has repeatedly requested cluster munitions "firing data" from Israel, instead of the more general data Israel has provided, but its requests have so far gone unanswered. The Israeli Mission says it has given the UN all the information it has on this issue. USUN requests that the Department determine if the information the UN seeks can be obtained. If this issue is not resolved before the SYG's next report on UNSCR 1701 in September 2007, USUN expects significant pressure in the Council to adopt tougher language in UNSC statements on Lebanon calling on Israel to cooperate with the UN on this issue. End Summary and Comment.

Increased Attention in the Council

¶12. (C) In his June 28, 2007 report on UNSCR 1701 implementation, the SYG noted that &despite a number of attempts by United Nations senior officials to obtain information regarding the firing data of cluster munitions utilized the conflict in the second quarter of 2006, Israel has yet to provide that data. I call on the Government of Israel once again to provide the information to the UN.⁸ The SYG's request was amplified after a French soldier serving in UNIFIL was killed while trying to defuse unexploded ordnance in south Lebanon on July 25, 2007. Several UNSC delegations argued that the Council should also call on Israel to provide this data. USUN ultimately negotiated language in the PRST in which the Council &renewed its support⁸ for the SYG's request rather than calling on Israel itself to take action. Indonesia, Qatar, and South Africa, however, said they would press for stronger language on this issue in subsequent Council statements on Lebanon if Israel has not satisfied the SYG's request by that time.

DPKO Outlines Outstanding Requests

¶13. (C) DPKO told USUN that the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) regards the maps of unexploded ordnance the IDF provided after the July-August 2006 conflict as "completely useless" for planning and clearance purposes. These maps, one of which DPKO sent privately to USUN (Note: E-mailed to IO. Please protect. End Note.), show more than 50 circles drawn around sections of Lebanon thought to hold areas of old

minefields, new unexploded ordnance fired by both the IDF and Hizballah, and areas IDF troops were told to avoid. The information the UN needs, according to DPKO, is cluster munitions "firing data." UNMAS officials tell USUN they have asked IDF to provide: (1) the location of areas targeted using explosive ordnance; (2) the approximate number of explosive ordnance used in these areas; (3) the type and nature of explosive ordnance used in these areas; and (4) the general location of known and probable unexploded ordnance. According to the UN Secretariat, Israeli diplomats have declined to answer repeated requests for this information by UNSCO Michael Williams or forwarded the requests to the IDF, which has not responded. Efforts to address this issue within the tripartite LAF-IDF-UNIFIL meetings have also reportedly been unproductive.

Israelis Say Their Map is All They've Got

¶4. (C) When approached by USUN, Israeli Mission officers reported that the map the IDF gave UNIFIL) described above) represents all the information Israel has on unexploded ordnance in south Lebanon. They also asserted that after receiving this map from the IDF, UNIFIL has not requested any more information from Israel on this issue. The Israel mission offered its view that all such requests have come from political officers within the Secretariat, whom they allege may have an interest in making the SYG,s reports on UNSCR 1701 appear &balanced,⁸ by criticizing both Hizballah and Israel. Noting that the cluster munitions Israel used in south Lebanon were provided by the U.S., the Israeli Mission also stated that Israeli and U.S. officials in Washington and Tel Aviv have discussed the UN,s requests for more data, and that U.S. officials seemed satisfied with Israel,s response.

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The Israeli Mission has also noted that Israel,s use of cluster munitions in south Lebanon may be investigated by the Winograd Commission or another internal Israeli probe, which could further complicate this issue.

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